

REMARKS

The present invention relates to a dry-process nonwoven pulp fabric.

In the Office Action of December 28, 2006, claim 1 was rejected as follows:

(1) 36 USC § 112, second paragraph - with respect to certain terminology in claim 1, particularly as to what “both sides” refers to, as well as the meaning of more than “5 g/m² to g/m².”

(2) 35 USC § 102(e) or 103(e) - based on Amundson et al (WO 00/38565).

Claim 1 is amended hereinabove, and claims 2-4 directed to preferred embodiments have been added. Applicant submits that these claims fully comply with all requirements of 35 USC § 112, and clearly distinguish over the cited Amundson et al reference, for the reasons explained below.

In the cited Amundson et al reference, there is no description of using conjugate fibers. It only describes using polyethylene and polypropylene fibers.

However, the amended claims herein require PET/PE **conjugate** fibers. Such PET/PE **conjugate** fiber are used in the Examples of present invention. These play an important role in maintaining strength in the wet state, because the strength of the core portion of the fiber is better than that of a single layer fiber such as polyethylene or polypropylene fiber. The Examiner’s attention is directed to several important recitation in dependent claim 1, including the following:

- (1) the surface layer portion contains "heat-bondable synthetic conjugate fibers".
- (2) the order of recitation of the surface layer and internal layer has been modified to improve clarity;
- (3) the expression "on both sides" has been replaced by "between which the internal layer portion is sandwiched", and "the front and back" has been deleted to further improve clarity; and
- (4) the expression "more than 5 g/m² to 12 g/m²" has been clarified to recite "the range from more than 5 g/m² to 12 g/m²".
- (5) In addition to the amendments to claim 1, claims 2, 3, and 4 have been added directed to preferred embodiments.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-4 of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby earnestly solicited.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No.: 10/542,400

Attorney Docket No.: Q88748

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

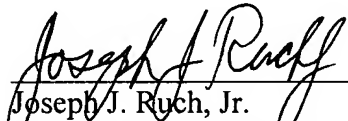
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